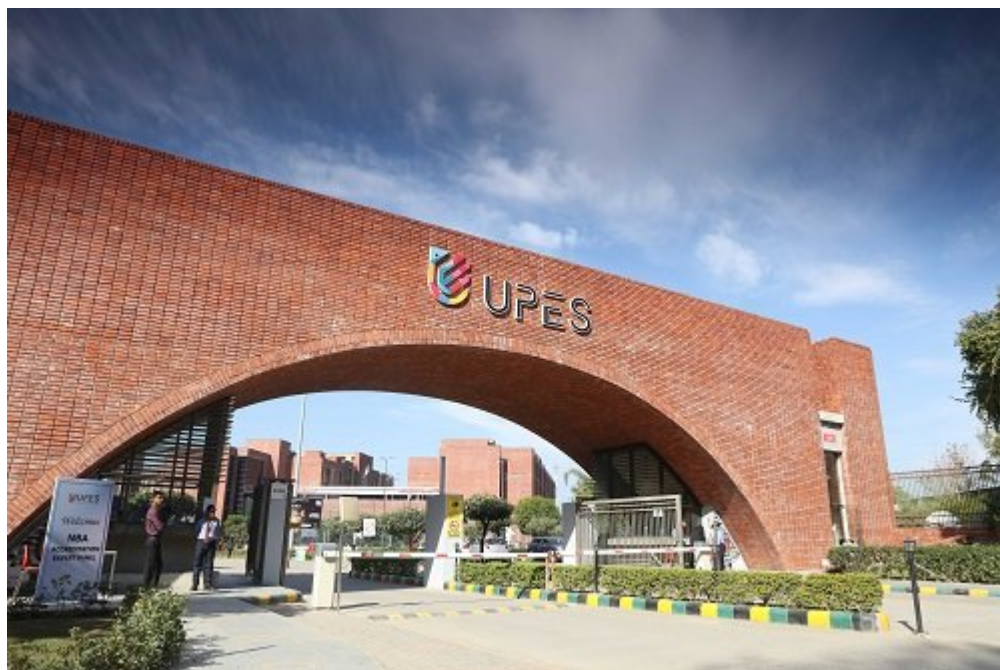


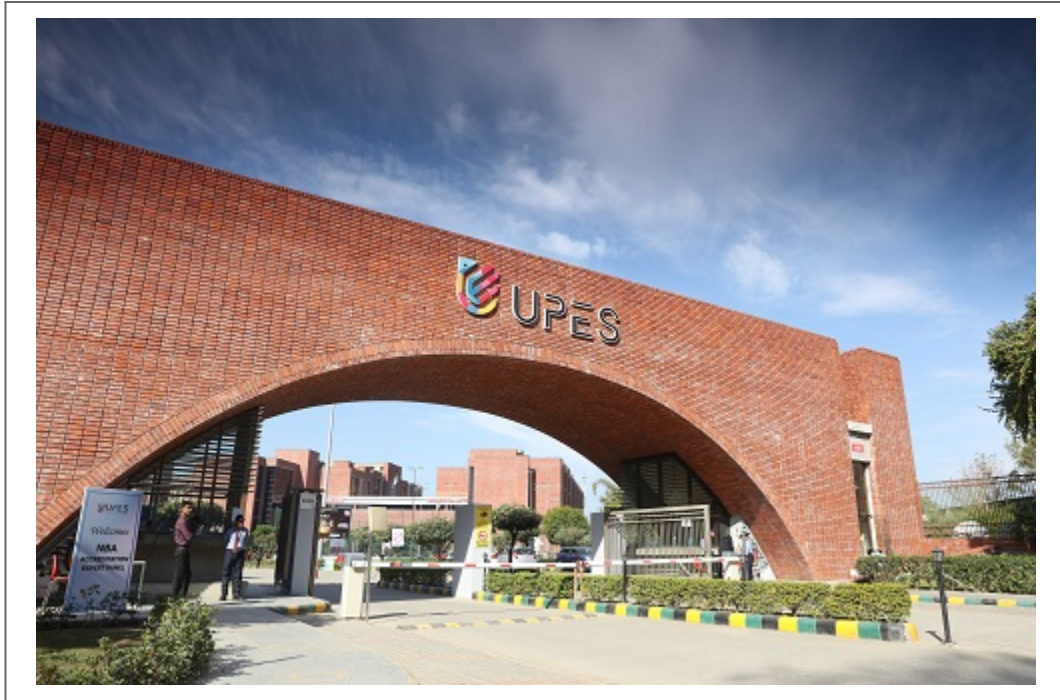
UPES Empowers Next Generation of Innovators with Future Founders Challenge 2025

Category: Business

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UPES, through its School of Business in collaboration with the Runway Incubator, has announced the launch of the **Future Founders Challenge 2025**, a prestigious national-level entrepreneurship competition designed to inspire and empower students from Classes 9 to 12. The challenge provides a unique platform for young innovators to develop solutions to real-world problems, gain hands-on experience of the start-up journey, and showcase their ideas on a national stage.



UPES launches Future Founders Challenge 2025 – Registrations Open

The Future Founders Challenge offers participants the opportunity to work closely with mentors and industry experts, attend engaging workshops, and refine their entrepreneurial skills. The initiative is aligned with UPES's vision as the '**University of Tomorrow**' and its commitment to nurturing a culture of innovation as a 'Start-up University'. It also complements national priorities such as Startup India, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and the Atal Innovation Mission.

UPES invites schools across India to nominate their most creative and entrepreneurial students for this transformative journey. Open to students of Classes 9 to 12, the competition requires participants to form teams of two to three members from the same school, with each team presenting a unique idea under a distinct team name. Schools may nominate multiple teams. The application window opened on 14 August 2025 and closes on 28 September 2025. Authorised school representatives can submit nominations by that time. Shortlisted teams will be announced on 1 October 2025, followed by a series of online workshops on 6, 11, and 15 October 2025. Teams will then

submit their final pitch decks by 27 October, with the list of finalists released on 31 October. The grand finale (date to be decided) will take place at the UPES campus in Dehradun, where the most promising ideas will be presented before an esteemed jury.

The rewards for winners are substantial, with the national champion team receiving a cash prize of Rs.1,00,000 and the second-placed team awarded Rs. 50,000. Zonal winners and runners-up from North, South, East, and West India will also be recognised with an award of Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 25,000, respectively. Beyond monetary awards, participants will gain invaluable exposure, mentorship, and potential access to incubation opportunities through the UPES Runway Incubator.

Prof. Rahul Nainwal, Chief Executive Officer, Runway Incubator, and Senior Director & Head, School of Business, UPES said, *"At UPES, we believe that entrepreneurship is not just about starting companies, but about cultivating a mindset that embraces innovation, resilience, and problem-solving. The Future Founders Challenge is our way of empowering young minds to think boldly, act decisively, and create solutions that can shape a better future. Through this platform, we aim to give school students the tools, mentorship, and confidence to take their first steps into the world of enterprise – and perhaps inspire the next generation of change-makers who will lead India and the world."*

Runway Incubator has enabled its startups to raise Rs. 20+ crore in funding, while also securing major national and state-level support-including Rs. 5 crore from DST to set up an iTBI, Rs. 5 crore from NITI Aayog for an Atal Community Innovation Centre, Rs.4.02 crore from BIRAC, and Rs. 2 crore from the Uttarakhand Government. With additional grants like Rs. 2.5 crore from MeitY and CSR support from HDFC Bank, Runway has rapidly emerged as a leading hub for innovation and entrepreneurship in the region.

Recognised as India's leading private university for academic reputation in the QS 2025 rankings, UPES continues to champion entrepreneurship and innovation by equipping young minds with the skills, mindset, and network to thrive in a dynamic world. Through initiatives like the Future Founders Challenge, UPES reaffirms its role in shaping the leaders and innovators of tomorrow.

For more information, including the detailed competition guide, visit www.upes.ac.in/future-founders-challenge or contact the organising team at futurefounders@ddn.upes.ac.in.

For other information, please visit: www.upes.ac.in.

